

MEMORANDUM FOR
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I recommend that the Watch Committee focus on the contingency (a probability in my view) that Poland will lift martial law, perhaps before 13 December.

From the Administration's standpoint, this would be a most awkward source of political surprise. Lifting martial law, restoring a facade of civilian government, releasing the remaining internees (including Walesa), and announcing the Pope's second visit next spring obviously would confront the Administration with some sticky decisions. Warsaw and Moscow would calculate that these moves would encourage West European governments to press Washington to ease economic and political sanctions against both Poland and USSR. The timing would be particularly crucial--squarely in the middle of US attempts to finesse the gas pipeline controversy by persuading the Europeans to extend NATO security planning to the economic and energy fields.

The NID Special of 15 Oct is on record that
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"by the end of the year" if calm prevails.

Date

3 November 1982

NIO/W Contribution to the DCI Watch CommitteePoland

--If Polish authorities prevent or contain a four-hour general strike on 10 November called by the underground Solidarity leadership, they may proceed with a decision to abolish martial law and restore a facade of civilian government, perhaps before 13 December, the first anniversary of martial law. They may also release most or all of the remaining internees who have not been indicted and announce that the Pope is expected to make his second visit to Poland next spring.

--Polish and Soviet leaders almost certainly believe the lifting of martial law and associated concessions will generate divisions between the US and Western Europe over whether to maintain economic and political sanctions against Poland and the USSR.

PLO-Syria-Jordan

--The impending meeting of the Palestine National Council, perhaps before the end of November, may result in a showdown between Arafat's "pragmatists" and radical PLO groups supported by Syria and rejectionist Arab regimes. It is possible that Arafat will face such a serious challenge to his leadership that he will be obliged to abandon the political strategy symbolized by his negotiations with King Hussein. In that contingency, Arafat would have no choice but to revert to an uncompromising stance of maximum demands.

--The Syrians are attempting to undermine Arafat's position by enlisting the support of PLO leaders opposed to a Palestinian state associated with Jordan. Syria may encourage radical Palestinian groups to stage terrorist incidents in Western Europe and the Middle East as a means of discrediting Arafat and his supporters in the PLO.

Lebanon

--The rapid re-establishment of the PLO political and military apparatus in northern Lebanon will complicate US efforts to broker negotiations for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the country. It may also impel the Begin government to take preemptive military actions that could escalate into confrontations between Syrian and Israeli forces along the Beirut-Damascus highway and in the Bekaa Valley.

USSR

--Brezhnev's 27 October speech urging that Moscow cannot ignore "the new things" that appear in China's policy may foreshadow new Soviet initiatives such as a proposal for a mutual reduction of forces along the border or even a token unilateral Soviet troop withdrawal.

--A reliable source reports that the Soviets are willing to discuss mutual troop reductions, and the Chinese are said to have again proposed mutual withdrawals from contested areas, which would then be demilitarized.

--Both Moscow and Beijing probably believe that even a limited troop reduction agreement would create a major impact abroad that would yield valuable dividends in their dealings with the West.